NUMB. CLXXIII.

The GUARDIAN.

——————Nec ſera comantem
Narciſſum, aut flexi tacuiſſem Vimen Acanthi,
Pallenteſque Hæderas, & amantes littora myrtos. Virg.

Tueſday, September 29. 1713.

I Lately took a particular Friend of mine to my Houſe in the Country, not without ſome Apprehenſion that it could afford little Entertainment to a Man of his Polite Taſte, particularly in Architecture and Gardening, who had ſo long been converſant with all that is beautiful and great in either. But it was a pleaſant Surprize to me, to hear him often declare, he had found in my little Retirement that Beauty which he always thought wanting in the moſt celebrated Seats, or if you will Villa's, of the Nation. This he deſcribed to me in thoſe Verſes with which *Martial* begins one of his Epigrams:

Baiana noſtri Villa, Baſſe, Fauſtini,
Non otioſis ordinata myrtetis,
Viduaque platano, tonſilique buxeto,
Ingrata lati ſpatia detinet campi,
Sed rure vero, barbaroque *lætatur.*

There is certainly ſomething in the amiable Simplicity of unadorned Nature, that ſpreads over the Mind a more noble ſort of Tranquility, and a loftier Senſation of Pleaſure, than can be raiſed from the nicer Scenes of Art.

This was the Taſte of the Ancients in their Gardens, as we may diſcover from the Deſcriptions are extant of them. The two moſt celebrated Wits of the World have each of them left us a particular Picture of a Garden; wherein thoſe great Maſters, being wholly unconfined, and Painting at Pleaſure, may be thought to have given a full Idea of what they eſteemed moſt excellent in this way. Theſe (one may obſerve) conſiſt intirely of the uſeful Part of Horticulture, Fruit Trees, Herbs, Water, *&c.* The Pieces I am ſpeaking of are *Virgil*'s Account of the Garden of the old *Corycian*, and *Homer*'s of that of *Alcinous*. The firſt of theſe is already known to the *Engliſh* Reader, by the excellent Verſions of Mr. *Dryden* and Mr. *Addiſon*. The other having never been attempted in our Language with any Elegance, and being the moſt beautiful Plan of this ſort that can be imagined, I ſhall here preſent the Reader with a Tranſlation of it.

(Price Two Pence.)

The Gardens of *Alcinous*, from *Homer*'s *Odyſſ.* 7.

Cloſe to the Gates a ſpacious Garden lies,
From Storms defended and inclement Skies:
Four Acres was th' allotted Space of Ground,
Fenc'd with a green Incloſure all around.
Tall thriving Trees conſeſt the fruitful Mold;
The red'ning Apple ripens here to Gold,
Here the blue Figg with luſcious Juice o'erflows,
With deeper Red the full Pomegranate glows,
The Branch here bends beneath the weighty Pear,
And verdant Olives flouriſh round the Year.
The balmy Spirit of the Weſtern Gale
Eternal breathes on Fruits untaught to fail:
Each dropping Pear a following Pear ſupplies,
On Apples Apples, Figs on Figs ariſe:
The ſame mild Seaſon gives the Blooms to blow,
The Buds to harden, and the Fruits to grow.

Here order'd Vines in equal Ranks appear
With all th' United Labours of the Year,
Some to unload the fertile Branches run,
Some dry the black'ning Cluſters in the Sun,
Others to tread the liquid Harveſt join,
The groaning Preſſes foam with Floods of Wine.
Here are the Vines in early Flow'r deſcry'd,
Here Grapes diſcolour'd on the ſunny Side,
And there in Autumn*'s richeſt Purple dy'd.*

Beds of all various Herbs, for ever green,
In beauteous Order terminate the Scene.

Two plenteous Fountains the whole Proſpect crown'd;
This thro' the Gardens leads its Streams around,
Viſits each Plant, and waters all the Ground:
While that in Pipes beneath the Palace flows,
And thence its Current on the Town beſtows;
To various Uſe their various Streams they bring,
The People one, and one ſupplies the King.

Sir *William Temple* has remark'd, that this Deſcription contains all the juſteſt Rules and Proviſions which can go toward compoſing the beſt Gardens.

dens. Its Extent was four *Acres*, which, in those times of Simplicity, was look'd upon as a large one, even for a Prince: It was inclos'd all round for Defence; and for Conveniency join'd close to the Gates of the Palace.

He mentions next the Trees, which were Standards, and suffered to grow to their full height. The fine Description of the Fruits that never failed, and the eternal Zephyrs, is only a more noble and poetical way of expressing the continual Succession of one Fruit after another throughout the Year.

The *Vineyard* seems to have been a Plantation distinct from the *Garden*; as also the *Beds of Greens* mentioned afterwards at the Extremity of the Inclosure, in the Nature and usual Place of our *Kitchen Gardens*.

The two Fountains are disposed very remarkably. They rose within the Inclosure, and were brought by Conduits or Ducts, one of them to water all Parts of the Gardens, and the other underneath the Palace into the Town, for the Service of the Publick.

How contrary to this Simplicity is the modern Practice of Gardening; we seem to make it our Study to recede from Nature, not only in the various Tonsure of Greens into the most regular and formal Shapes, but even in monstrous Attempts beyond the reach of the Art it self: We run into Sculpture, and are yet better pleas'd to have our Trees in the most awkward Figures of Men and Animals, than in the most regular of their own.

Hinc & nexilibus videas e frondibus hortos,
Implexos late muros, & Mœnia circum
Porrigere, & latas e ramis surgere turres;
Deflexam & Myrtum in Puppes, atque ærea rostra:
In buxisque undare fretum, atque e rore rudentes.
Forte alia frondere suis tentoria Castris;
Scutaque spiculaque & jaculantia citria Vallos.

I believe it is no wrong Observation that Persons of Genius, and those who are most capable of Art, are always most fond of Nature, as such are chiefly sensible, that all Art consists in the Imitation and Study of Nature. On the contrary, People of the common Level of Understanding are principally delighted with the little Niceties and Fantastical Operations of Art, and constantly think that *finest* which is least Natural. A Citizen is no sooner Proprietor of a couple of Yews, but he entertains Thoughts of erecting them into Giants, like those of *Guild-hall*. I know an eminent Cook, who beautified his Country Seat with a Coronation Dinner in Greens, where you see the Champion flourishing on Horseback at one end of the Table, and the Queen in perpetual Youth at the other.

For the benefit of all my loving Countrymen of this curious Taste, I shall here publish a Catalogue of Greens to be disposed of by an eminent Town-Gardiner, who has lately applied to me upon this Head. He represents, that for the Advancement of a politer sort of Ornament in the Villa's and Gardens adjacent to this great City, and in order to distinguish those Places from the meer barbarous Countries of gross Nature, the World stands much in need of a Virtuoso Gardiner who has a Turn to Sculpture, and is thereby capable of improving upon the Ancients of his Profession in the Imagery of Ever-greens. My Correspondent is arrived to such Perfection, that he cuts Family Pieces of Men, Women or Children. Any Ladies that please may have their own Effigies in Myrtle, or their Husbands in Horn-beam. He is a Puritan Wag, and never fails, when he shows his Garden, to repeat that Passage in the Psalms, *Thy Wife shall be as the fruitful Vine, and thy Children as Olive Branches round thy Table.* I shall proceed to his Catalogue, as he sent it for my Recommendation.

Adam and *Eve* in Yew; *Adam* a little shatter'd by the fall of the Tree of Knowledge in the great Storm; *Eve* and the Serpent very flourishing.

The Tower of *Babel*, not yet finished.

St. *George* in Box; his Arm scarce long enough, but will be in a Condition to stick the Dragon by next *April*.

A *green Dragon* of the same, with a Tail of Ground Ivy for the present.

N. B. *These two not to be Sold separately.*

Edward the *Black Prince* in Cypress.

A *Lauristine* Bear in Blossom, with a Juniper Hunter in Berries.

A Pair of Giants, *stunted*, to be sold cheap.

A Queen *Elizabeth* in Phylyræa, a little inclining to the Green Sickness, but of full growth.

Another Queen *Elizabeth* in Myrtle, which was very forward, but Miscarried by being too near a Savine.

An old Maid of Honour in Wormwood.

A topping *Ben Johnson* in Lawrel.

Divers eminent Modern Poets in Bays, somewhat blighted, to be disposed of a Pennyworth.

A Quick-set Hog shot up into a Porcupine, by its being forgot a Week in rainy Weather.

A Lavender Pigg with Sage growing in his Belly.

Noah's Ark in Holly, standing on the Mount; the Ribs a little damaged for want of Water.

A Pair of *Maidenheads* in Firr, in great forwardness.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

This Day is Published, (Printed with a small Letter) The Third Edition of,

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LONDON: Printed for *J. Tonson* in the *Strand*; and Sold by *A. Baldwin* in *Warwick-Lane*; where Advertisements are taken in. 1713.